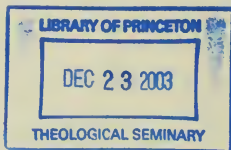


Minutes of the Meeting
for the Organization
of the Northern
Baptist Convention
Held at
Washington, D.C.
May 16, 17, 1907

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American Baptist Convention.
Minutes of the meeting for the
organization of the Northern
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Convention held at Washington
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the American Baptist Historical Society.

Frank G. Lewis

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Of the Meeting for the Organization of

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WITH HISTORICAL PREFACE; AND ADDENDUM.



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The Northern Baptist Convention

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Hon. Fred Brasted.....Oklahoma City, Okla.

Pres. E. B. Bryan, LL.D.....Franklin, Ind.

Rev. J. W. Conley, D.D.....Omaha, Neb.

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Rev. J. Y. Montague.....Hiawatha, Kan.

Rev. W. Quay Rosselle, D.D.....Williamsport, Penn.

Rev. F. H. Rowley, D.D.....Boston, Mass.

Mr. E. M. Runyan.....Portland, Ore.

Rev. F. W. Sweet.....Adrian, Mich.

Mr. J. R. Vaughan.....Waterloo, Iowa

Provisional Constitution and By-Laws

PREAMBLE.

We, representatives of Baptist churches, in convention assembled, do hereby declare our belief in the independence of the local church, in the advisory and representative nature of the local and state associations, and our loyalty to all our denominational organizations. We do also affirm our conviction that, in view of the growth of our country and denomination, there is further need of a general body that shall serve the common interests of our entire brotherhood, as the individual church, the district and state associations minister to the interests of their several constituencies. We do therefore organize ourselves under the following

CONSTITUTION.

NAME.

Article I. The name of this organization shall be the Northern Baptist Convention.

OBJECT.

Article II. The object of this Convention shall be to give expression to the sentiment of its constituency upon matters of denominational importance and of general religious and moral interest; to develop denominational unity; and to give increased efficiency to efforts for the evangelization of America and the world.

MEMBERSHIP.

Article III. This Convention shall be composed of delegates, appointed by churches, local associations, and other organizations, as follows:

Section. 1. Each church may appoint one delegate and one

additional delegate for every one hundred members, or fraction thereof, above the first one hundred.

Section 2. Each local or district association may appoint two delegates and one additional delegate for every ten churches, or fraction thereof, above the first ten.

Section 3. Officers and executive boards or committees of state conventions, and denominationally recognized missionary, educational and philanthropic organizations may be *ex-officio* members of this convention.

OFFICERS.

Article IV. Section 1. The officers of this Convention shall be a president, three vice-presidents, a corresponding secretary, a recording secretary, and a treasurer, who, together with fifteen other members shall constitute an executive committee, any member of a Baptist church in the territory of the Convention being eligible to office.

Section 2. The officers shall serve from the close of the meeting of the Convention during which they are elected to the close of the next meeting of the Convention, or until their successors are elected.

AMENDMENTS.

Article V. Amendments to this constitution may be made by a vote of the majority of delegates present at any regular session of the Convention, after notice thereof has been given in writing by any five members at a previous annual meeting, or by the executive committee of the Convention.

BY-LAWS.

I. This Convention shall meet annually in May.

II. At the first session of each annual meeting an enrollment of delegates shall be made and a nominating committee shall be appointed.

III. A collection for the expenses of the Convention shall be taken each year at a time to be determined by the Executive Committee.

IV. No other appeals for money shall be made nor collections taken, which have not been approved by the Executive Committee.

V. The Executive Committee shall make arrangements for the annual meetings, after conference with the Executive Committees or boards of the societies,* make an annual report to the Convention, and care for its interests between the annual meetings.

VI. These by-laws may be amended at any meeting of the Convention by a majority vote, after notice of the proposed amendment has been presented in writing and signed by at least ten delegates.

*["Societies" refers to The American Baptist Missionary Union, The American Baptist Home Mission Society, and The American Baptist Publication Society.—COR. SEC'Y.]

Historical Preface.

(*The Executive Committee thinks it wise that the minutes of the meetings at which the Northern Baptist Convention was provisionally organized, should be preceded by a statement concerning the steps which led to those meetings. This is done to aid in a proper understanding of the movement.*)

(1) In May, 1896, at Asbury Park, N. J., "A Commission on Systematic Beneficence" was created, by the adoption of a series of resolutions presented by the finance committee of the American Baptist Missionary Union. These resolutions were also adopted by the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the American Baptist Publication Society. Rev. F. M. Ellis, D.D., of Baltimore, Maryland, then declared, "We have unified the denomination at the contribution box, and that is next to the throne of grace."

(2) In May, 1897, the Women's Baptist Home Mission Society adopted resolutions, urging Northern Baptists to combine all their missionary periodicals into one, and pointed out the waste occasioned by the current method of publishing numerous journals. At the Anniversaries the same year, the report of the Commission on Systematic Beneficence called attention to the significant and the suggestive example of the joint efforts which had been made during the previous year by the three general societies to cancel their debts.

(3) In November, 1898, at the meeting of the Baptist Congress in Buffalo, N. Y., Rev. George E. Horr, D.D., then editor of *The Watchman*, declared, "There is a great opportunity for the denomination to harmonize its missionary work. * * * * There is just as much necessity that the work of the Missionary Union, the Home Mission Society and the Publication Society should be harmonized,—note that I do not use the word *unified*,—should be *harmonized*, as there ever was that our controversies in regard to the Bible question should be adjusted, as they were at Saratoga a number of years ago." This significant deliverance

was the subject of much comment. The denominational press, particularly *The Standard*, started discussion which increased the sentiment in favor of a closer relation between the organizations that were conducting our denominational work.

(4) So far the discussion had related principally to the harmonious co-operation of distinct organizations. It was inevitable that such discussions should produce a feeling in the hearts, and a conviction in the minds of many intelligent Baptists that our brotherhood should be more pronounced and an exhibition of it in Christian work more manifest.

(5) In May, 1900, at the Anniversaries in Detroit, Mich., "A Commission on Co-Ordination", composed of representatives of the general societies, including the women's organizations, with Mr. Stephen Greene, of Massachusetts, as chairman, was appointed to consider the better co-ordination of our denominational work. The duties of this commission were: "To consider the relative amounts which the denomination should be asked to furnish for our different benevolent enterprises, and also to consider the practicability of more closely co-ordinating the different departments of our denominational work, and to make such other recommendations as in their judgment they may deem wise."

(6) In May, 1901, in Springfield, Mass., there was held the first of several general meetings of the denomination. This was a mass meeting on "Co-Ordination." The report of Mr. Stephen Greene, of Newton Center, Mass., chairman of the committee, made six notable suggestions. Among them was one that

"The best interests of our work as a denomination require that the annual gatherings of the American Baptist Home Mission Society, the American Baptist Missionary Union and the American Baptist Publication Society should be representative and delegated bodies, having the same basis of representation, so that the delegates to the three societies shall be, so far as possible, identical.

"As a step necessary toward this end we recommend that the several societies, at the earliest possible date, and after mutual consultation through their executive boards,

change their constitution so as to require the same qualifications of voters at their anniversaries.

"It is believed that such action is fundamental, and if taken would create an atmosphere in which a 'better co-ordination' would be possible. If the executive officers and boards of our several societies could be brought to realize, as such action would help them to see, that their constituencies were actually one, a distinct advantage would be gained, and if the representatives of our churches could go up to the Anniversaries with the clear conviction that an actual responsibility concerning the entire work of the denomination rested upon them, it is certain that a better co-ordination of the different departments of our work would be the result."

It was at this *general denominational meeting* that many remarks were made upon the need for reforming the method of conducting our Anniversaries, and for improving the existing scheme of representation. Objections to the proposed uniform basis of representation were raised to the effect that it was a step towards consolidation. There were also vague references to an impression that there was competition and rivalry between the societies.

The Women's Home Missionary Society, during these Anniversaries, adopted resolutions favoring co-ordination, and advising that a period of five years be devoted to adjusting existing interests without the injury of any.

At these Anniversaries also, another recommendation of the committee of which Mr. Greene was chairman, was adopted, providing for an annual joint meeting of executive boards or committees of the societies, but a recommendation to publish a joint missionary periodical was rejected.

Another recommendation was adopted to appoint a committee of nine, to consider the matter of district secretaryships of the societies, and the relations of collection agencies.

This was a most notable meeting. It had a marked influence upon the growing desire for co-ordination and orderly procedure. It is claimed that from this meeting, and from the report presented by Mr. Greene, dates the denominational movement, resulting in the formation of the Northern Baptist Convention.

(7) In December, 1901, in New York City, there was held an important conference of the executive boards and committees of the societies, in accordance with a recommendation adopted at Springfield. At this conference, among the questions discussed was, "What Changes, if Any, are Desirable and Feasible in our Denominational Work?" A committee was also appointed to take into consideration the matter of the relations of the collection agencies of the societies. It was voted to submit the methods involved in the operation of the several societies to a general meeting of the societies to be held in St. Paul.

(8) In May, 1902, at the Anniversaries in St. Paul, Minn., resolutions offered by Dr. Lemuel Moss, at a meeting of the American Baptist Missionary Union, were almost unanimously adopted, providing for a committee of fifteen persons who were to ascertain whether there was any lack of proper adjustment and co-operation between the three societies, including organizations associated with them, as to fields of labor, collecting and other agencies, and methods of work, and whether there could be an improvement in the mutual relations of these agencies. These resolutions were also adopted by the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the American Baptist Publication Society.

The committee appointed at the mid-year conference in New York City, in December, 1901, reported that, "in view of existing conditions, neither economy nor efficiency would be furthered by the adoption of the method of employing one man to represent the three societies." At a general conference of the three societies, during their Anniversaries in St. Paul, the report of this committee was brought up for consideration, and a motion to appoint one district secretary to represent the three societies in a given territory was defeated by a vote of 127 for it, to 135 against. The whole matter was then referred to the committee of fifteen provided for in the resolution offered by Dr. Moss.

At the same general conference of the three societies, the publication of one missionary magazine was also considered, and after opposition to such a consolidation of missionary magazines, it was voted to appoint a committee to investigate and report upon the matter.

(9) In May, 1903, at the Anniversaries at Buffalo, N. Y., the Committee of Fifteen appointed the previous year at St. Paul, reported that consolidation of the three societies was neither practical nor desirable, and left matters practically where they were. However, their report resulted in the appointment of a Committee of Conference, consisting of nine persons, "to which all matters of controversy between the missionary societies should be referred, and which should have authority to settle such controversies in the name of the denomination." This committee has had no matters brought before it, and indeed has had no existence since the year expired for which it was appointed. No attention has been paid to it, and no appointments have been made to membership upon it since the Anniversaries that created it.

(10) In May, 1904, at the Anniversaries in Cleveland, O., there was another general denomination meeting at which, however, no opportunity was given to discuss general denominational matters. At this meeting, a committee was appointed to represent the Baptists of the North, in co-operation with other committees, in a proposed Baptist World Congress to be held in London. This Congress met in 1905 and was not only suggestive, but decidedly helpful to the movement for denominational solidarity. The same effect was produced by the formation of the General Convention of the Baptists of North America, in Saint Louis in May, 1905.

(11) In September, 1906, the Chicago Baptist Association, after listening to a notable paper entitled, "An Awakening Consciousness of Denominational Unity, What Does it Demand?" adopted the following resolution:

For years there has been a growing belief among our churches that there should be more coherence in our missionary work, and especially that our Baptist Anniversaries should be made more helpful to denominational unity. The splendid work now carried on by our several missionary societies ought to be more widely extended; and there should be some platform from which may be voiced the sentiments of the denomination upon movements and policies which concern the denomination as a whole, and are not germane to the work of any one of our present societies exclusively.

In view of the widespread dissatisfaction with present arrangements for conducting our Baptist Anniversaries, dissatisfaction which in no degree concerns the honored leaders of our denominational societies, but which concerns arrangements and policies and precedents growing out of the nature of the organizations and their history, therefore,

Resolved, That the Chicago Baptist Association, consisting of over 20,000 Baptists, puts upon record its earnest desire for greater effectiveness in the conduct of our great annual meetings, known popularly as the Baptist Anniversaries.

In order that reasonable steps may be taken looking to improvements, this association urges the executives of our national societies to call a joint meeting of all societies in connection with the Anniversaries of May, 1907. That for this meeting a suitable program be provided by the executive boards of the societies; that provision be made for the permanent organization of a general association or convention representing all the northern Baptist churches; that one of the special functions of this association or convention shall be the appointment of a representative committee on arrangement to act in connection with the boards of the societies in unifying and improving the exercises of all the meetings of all the societies whose anniversaries are held each May; that this general association or convention be so organized and its objects be so stated that it shall voice to a large degree the trend of denominational sentiment and policy in such matters as touch the welfare of all the churches, leaving to the societies the management of the great missionary and publication work which they are now conducting.

Resolved, That if no steps are taken by the boards of the societies before April 1, 1907, to call such a general or joint meeting as proposed, that the moderator of this association be empowered to appoint a committee to act in conjunction with other committees and representatives of churches in this and other states to consider the advisability of calling a general convention or association for the purposes specified.

(12) In November, 1906, at a meeting of the Baptist Congress in Saint Louis, Mo., a conference was held in which brethren from different parts of the country participated. It was decided to call the attention of the general societies to the widespread demand for an organized expression of denominational unity. The following petition, numerously signed by

prominent ministers and laymen from all parts of the country, was addressed to the secretaries of the societies:

To the Corresponding Secretaries of
 The American Baptist Missionary Union; and
 The American Baptist Home Mission Society; and
 The American Baptist Publication Society,

Dear Brethren:

In view of the growing desire, most recently shown by state conventions, district associations, and persons, for an organization through which Northern Baptists may consider the manifold interests of the kingdom of God, and express a denominational opinion thereon, we respectfully request you to set apart, during the Anniversaries of the societies in 1907, at least one morning and afternoon, as near the middle of the week as possible, for a meeting to consider the expediency of such an organization.

We suggest that in your call for this meeting, if you consent to issue it, each church be requested to appoint its pastor and two delegates, who shall represent it at this meeting, with power to effect the organization if found desirable.

This request is addressed to you in order to avoid even an apparent expression of any unfriendly attitude towards our heartily appreciated denominational societies or their executive officers.

(13) December 11th, 1906, in compliance with the request of those brethren, the following call was issued for the meeting at which the Convention was provisionally organized:

Whereas, in various quarters a desire has been expressed for a meeting in connection with the Anniversaries at Washington, D. C., in 1907, to consider the question of a general organization of Baptists as represented in the constituencies of the American Baptist Missionary Union, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, and the American Baptist Publication Society; the undersigned acting upon the request of those interested in the subject, and with the approval of their respective boards, and representing their joint committee on the Anniversaries, do hereby formally call a meeting of those who shall be entitled to membership in these societies, and of others who shall be formally appointed by their churches to participate in the deliberations, on Thursday evening, May 16, and Friday forenoon, May

17, at the Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, D. C., for the purpose of effecting a general organization, if it shall be deemed desirable to do so; and suggest that Thursday evening, Rev. W. C. Bitting, D.D., of St. Louis, Mo., address the body for fifteen minutes upon a motion to form such an organization, to be followed by Rev. A. J. Rowland, D.D., of Philadelphia, Pa., in an address of ten minutes in seconding the motion; these to be followed by general discussion in which speakers shall be limited to five minutes each; and that Friday forenoon be devoted to the consideration of the report of the committee on organization with an address of twenty minutes by Prof. Shailer Mathews on the functions of such an organization, followed by general discussion, speakers being limited to five minutes each.

H. L. MOREHOUSE,
T. S. BARBOUR,
A. J. ROWLAND,
Committee.

Minutes of the Meetings

AT WHICH THE NORTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION WAS
PROVISIONALLY ORGANIZED.

Washington, D. C., May 16, 1907.

1. Pursuant to a call issued by Secretaries H. L. Morehouse, of The American Baptist Home Mission Society; T. S. Barbour, of The American Baptist Missionary Union, and A. J. Rowland, of The American Baptist Publication Society, acting upon a generally expressed request for a meeting in connection with the Anniversaries of those societies to consider the question of the formation of a General Organization of Baptists in the constituencies of the societies named, a meeting was held in the Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, D. C. It was called to order by H. L. Morehouse, who also presented an order of service that was adopted.

2. F. H. Rowley, of Mass., was chosen chairman. Prayer was offered by George E. Rees of Penna. The congregation sang the hymn "Jesus, Saviour, pilot me." J. G. Walker, of Penna., was chosen secretary.

3. Addresses on "The Need and Value of a General Organization" were delivered by W. C. Bitting, of Mo., and A. J. Rowland, of Penna.

4. The address of W. C. Bitting embodied the following resolutions, which were adopted seriatim, after remarks by W. S. Shallenberger, of Washington, D. C.; H. B. Williams, of Mass.; C. W. Chamberlin, of Mass.; H. L. Morehouse, of N. Y.; Galusha Anderson, of Mass., and S. J. Langford, of N. Y.

Resolved, That we, representatives of Baptist churches, in convention assembled, do hereby declare our belief in the independence of the local church, in the advisory and representative nature of the local and state associations, and our loyalty to the work of our missionary and educational societies; and,

Resolved, That we do also affirm our conviction that, in view of the growth of our country and denomination, there is further need of a general body that shall serve the common interests of our entire brotherhood, as the individual church,

the district and state associations minister to the interests of their several constituencies; and,

Resolved, That we do now proceed to organize ourselves into such a body.

5. L. A. Crandall, of Minn., submitted the following, which was adopted after extended conference participated in by Mor-nay Williams, of N. Y.; H. L. Morehouse, of N. Y.; G. E. Rees, of Penna.; S. J. Langford, of N. Y.; D. DeWolf, of N. J.; R. H. Tracy, of Ohio.; D. G. Garabrant, of N. J.; J. W. Brougher, of Ore., and W. P. Hellings, of N. Y.

Resolved, That a committee of fifteen brethren be appointed to draft a plan of organization; to which committee the matters now under discussion shall be referred for further consideration; said committee to report at the session to-morrow morning.

6. The following brethren were named by the chairman to serve on the committee:

W. S. Shallenberger, D. C.,	Walter Calley, Pa.,
L. A. Crandall, Minn.,	B. A. Greene, Ill.,
L. C. Barnes, Mass.,	J. M. English, Mass.,
W. C. Bitting, Mo.,	C. C. Barry, Mass.,
Shailer Mathews, Ill.,	J. S. Dickerson, Ill.,
H. L. Morehouse, N. Y.,	J. W. Brougher, Ore.,
A. J. Rowland, Pa.,	C. H. Moss, Mass.
F. P. Haggard, Mass.,	

7. Adjourned after prayer by L. C. Barnes, of Mass.

May 17th, Morning Session.

8. The meeting re-assembled at 9:45 o'clock. After sing-ing the hymn "My faith looks up to Thee," prayer was offered by Galusha Anderson, of Mass.

9. The minutes of yesterday's session were read and ap-proved.

10. On behalf of the committee of fifteen L. A. Crandall, of Minn., submitted a report as follows:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

Your committee, to whom was referred for consideration the form of the proposed Union or Convention of Northern Baptists and the preparation of a constitution and by-laws for the same, begs leave to report as follows:

I. We recommend that the organization, to the creation of which we shall proceed at this time, be a provisional one on the basis of the constitution and by-laws to be presented in this report. Said constitution and by-laws to be subject to final ratification next May by a convention assembled in accordance with the terms of said constitution and by-laws.

II. We recommend the adoption of the following provisional constitution and by-laws:

(For the provisional constitution and by-laws see pages 4-6.)

11. Pending the consideration of this report an address was delivered by Shailer Mathews, of Ill., on "The Functions of the Proposed Organization".

12. After amendment and conference, the recommendations of the committee, and its plan of organization, were adopted.

13. On behalf of the committee of fifteen H. L. Morehouse submitted a further report recommending a list of officers to serve during the year. The recommendation was adopted and the officers named were declared elected.

(See list of officers page 3.)

14. It was voted that the minutes of these meetings be printed and distributed under the direction of a special committee composed of the officers of the Convention.

15. It was voted that the corresponding secretary be instructed to send greetings to the Southern Baptist Convention now in session at Richmond, Va.

16. A collection, amounting to \$42.57 was taken at a session of The American Baptist Publication Society for the expenses of the Convention.

17. A communication concerning temperance was referred to the Executive Committee.

18. Adjourned after prayer by H. L. Morehouse, of N. Y.

J. G. WALKER, Secretary.

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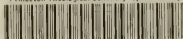
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